TNote125 — Student Locator Framework Email Notification Diagnostics

The Student Locator Agent uses standard Internet email to notify designated administrators when a student record submission has resulted in an "error" or "near match" status. These statuses are shown in the Transactions view as "User Fixing Error" and "User Matching" respectively. Tech Note 125 is a procedure for diagnosing and repairing issues which interfere with delivery of notifications via email.

Recipients—Who Gets Notified by SLF via Email?

You must have at least one person designated to receive emails. You can designate recipients on a per-district basis, per-school basis, or both. Recipient settings are in the "Notifications" portion of the Agent Settings window in the Student Locator Console.

Sender—Which Email Sending Account Does SLF Use?

In order to send emails, the Agent must be configured with an IP address or network name of a valid email system, and usually must also have a valid username and password for that system. Email server settings are in the "E-mail" portion of the Agent Settings window in the Student Locator Console.

Diagnostics

If you see errors or near matches in the Transactions view but the proper recipients are not getting emails, there are several places to check for issues.

Recipient and Sender Configuration
Review your current notification settings in the Student Locator Console. Make sure that the recipient email addresses are correctly entered, and that the sender information is also correct.

Spam Filtering
Because the SLF emails are automated, they may be misidentified by email filtering software as "spam" (unsolicited bulk email). There are several kinds of email filters, but they fall into two categories:

- If your email system has a filter for spam, ask the email administrator to check and see if the SLF emails are being caught. If they are being caught, work with the email administrator to configure the filter to ignore ("whitelist") SLF emails.

- If you have a filter on your own machine, check your "Junk Mail" folder and/or the logs from your filter software to see if the SLF emails are being caught. If your local filter is catching the SLF emails, find out from the vendor how to configure the filter to ignore ("whitelist") SLF emails.

Connectivity

A common source of problems is an inability of the Locator Agent to communicate properly with your email server. Versions of the Locator Agent after 1.0.3.1 include a built in Test button that tests whether the entered information will work to send an email out. To use the test button, do the following:
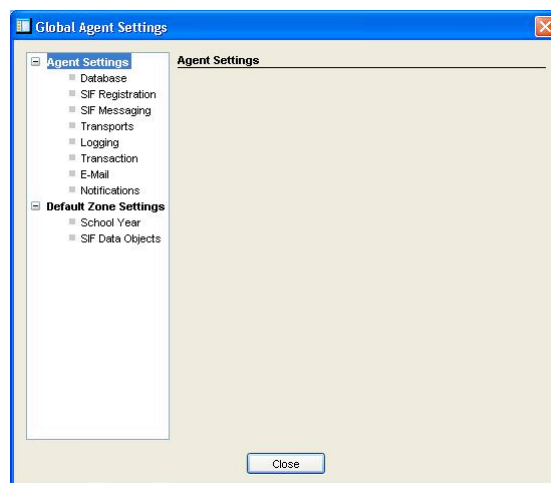
1. Open the Student Locator Console the way you normally do.

You see the Student Locator Agent console. (The image below is from an early version of the Locator agent; your agent console may differ.)
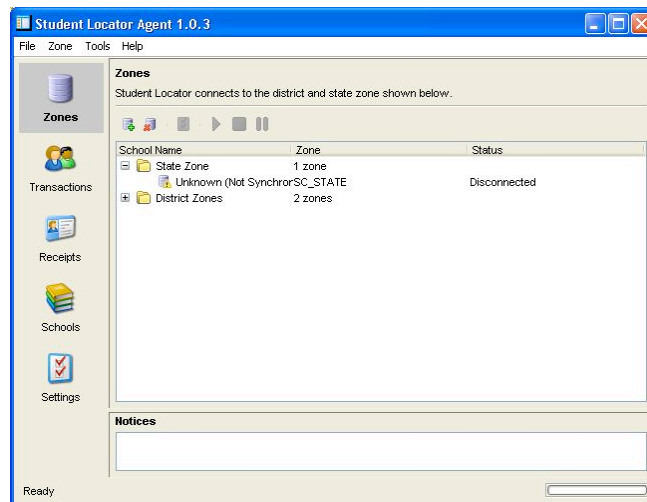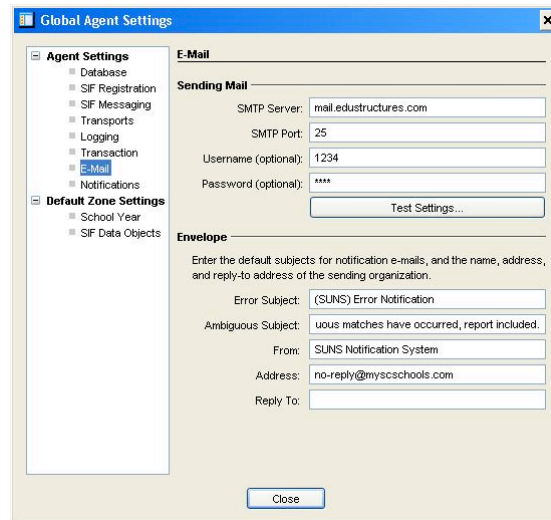

2. From the File menu in the Student Locator Console, select "Agent Settings".

You see the Agent Settings window.

3. In the left panel of the Agent Settings window, click on E-Mail.

You see the E-Mail panel. Your settings will be different; for example, the Envelope section will reflect information specific to your state.

4. Make sure a valid SMTP Server, SMTP port, Username and Password are entered.

SMTP Server and SMTP Port are always required.

The Server can be an IP address (for example, 67.35.24.32), a short server name (for example, "staffmail") or a fully qualified domain name (for example, "staffmail.hobble.k12.ut.us"). The server field can contain only numbers, letters, and periods; no special characters.

The SMTP port is a number, usually 25. If 25 doesn't seem to work, check with your administrator. GroupWise in particular sometimes runs SMTP on alternate ports.

Username and Password are usually, but not always, required. Check with your email administrator if you are unsure. The Username and Password can be any account that has sending rights on the email server. Depending on the system, the Username is most likely to be in the form of a short name (e.g. "dave"), but a few email systems use the full email address ("mary@hobble.k12.us.us") as the login name. Often, but not always, the short name is the same as a user's local network name.

5. Once you are sure valid information has been entered in those fields, click the Test Settings button.

> You see an Input window as shown below where you can put in an email address to which you want a test message sent.
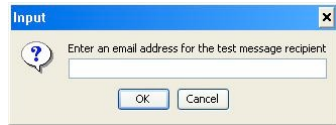
6. Type in your own email address (so you can check it most effectively) and then click OK.

> The Input window closes. If the connection was valid, you will see a message like the one below.
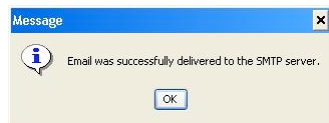
> If you don't see that message, and instead see an error message, then an email connection was not made between your system and the email server. Go to the Additional Troubleshooting section below.

8. When you are finished testing, click Close.

> You are returned to the Student Locator Console.

Additional Troubleshooting

1. Reconfirm the server, port, username and password with your email system administrator to make sure you have everything entered correctly.

2. With the correct information entered, click Close to close the Settings window, then select "Agent Settings" from the File menu to open it again, and come back to the Email section.

3. Try the Test Settings button again.

4. If you still get error messages, write down the information in the error message and go over it with your email administrator.

5. With your email administrator, run the following connectivity test:

> a) At the machine where SLF is installed, open a Command Prompt window (or a Terminal window on Macintosh systems).

b) In the window, type in a command of the form:
```
telnet <SMTP Server> <SMTP Port>
```
where the bracketed phrases are replaced by the entries you used in configuring email in the Locator agent. For example,
```
telnet mail.edustructures.com 25
```

If your machine can connect to the email server, you will see a response similar to the following:

```
220 <SMTP Server> <other information> <date>
```

If you get a response similar to this, then you are connecting to a valid SMTP server on a valid port and it is waiting for your message info.

If you get an error message, then the SMTP server name or IP address is not correct or your access to the server may be blocked by a firewall or router somewhere between the system you are on and the SMTP server. You will need to have your network or email administrator fix the connectivity problem.

c) If you had connected successfully, type
```
 quit
```
and press [enter] or [return] to end the connection to the email server.

5. Work with your district's email administrator and use the data from the Locator Test Settings button and the connectivity test above to address the situation.

6. If you and the email administrator together cannot figure out the problem, contact your designated support provider for Student Locator issues.